

Evaluation of NHTSA's Distracted Driving Demonstration Project: Hartford and Syracuse

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Program

▲ 4 Waves of High Visibility Enforcement

- ▶ Wave 1: April 2010
- ▶ Wave 2: July 2010
- ▶ Wave 3: September-October 2010
- ▶ Wave 4: March-April 2011

▲ Hartford, CT and Syracuse, NY

▲ Paid Media

▲ Earned Media

Design

Data

- ▶ Ticketing numbers
- ▶ Earned media clips
- ▶ Media buy strength
- ▶ Awareness/Attitude (1 page survey collected at DMVs)
- ▶ Observed usage (Hand-held or “Texting” or Earpiece)

 Data were collected in both enforcement and comparison cities

Results

▲ Media penetration was high

- ▶ Over 50% in CT heard “Phone in one hand....”

▲ Ticketing was huge

- ▶ (between 99 and 190 tickets per 10k population)

▲ Hand-held phone use declined

- ▶ CT from baseline 6.8% to 2.9%

▲ “Texting” declined

- ▶ (CT 3.9% to 1.1%)

Conclusions

- ▲ Cell phone ticketing was substantial
- ▲ Observation data show a decrease in use
- ▲ Awareness data was remarkably high
 - ▶ 6 in 10 heard something about distracted driving
 - ▶ Motorists believe DD is dangerous, yet still do it
- ▲ There was an increase in:
 - ▶ Message recognition
 - ▶ Perceived strictness of enforcement
 - ▶ Those who got a ticket
 - ▶ Those who heard of enforcement

Unknowns

- ▲ Do we need that level of enforcement?
- ▲ Do the rates stay down?
- ▲ Does it shift drivers from Hand-held to Hands-free?
- ▲ Will it impact crashes?